

#### REMARKS

This Amendment addresses the issues outstanding from the final Office Action dated July 21, 2006. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Claims 1-5 remain pending. Claims 6-8 have been added. Accordingly, Claims 1-8 are active in the application.

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP2588338 in view of JP2002-166835. Without acceding to the rejection, independent Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to set forth certain distinctive features of applicant's invention more precisely. At least as presently amended, Claims 1 and 4 distinguish patentably from the applied references.

As amended, Claims 1 and 4 recite, *inter alia*, than an axial length of a respective surface portion of each of the pair of movable pieces in contact with the inner column is at least substantially equal to a cross dimension of the bore in an axial plane of the screw rod parallel to an axis of the steering column. See, e.g., Figs. 3A, 3B, and 4.

In addition to the deficiencies noted in Applicant's Amendment dated May 15, 2006, it is readily apparent that the applied references do not satisfy the limitations newly added to Claims 1 and 4. Merely making a movable piece in a

steering column apparatus non-circular or polygonal would not produce the structural features of Claims 1 and 4 as presently amended.

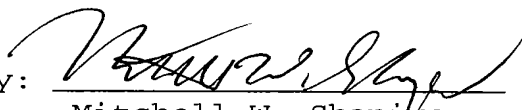
Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-5 are in condition for allowance.

New Claims 6 and 7 depend from Claim 1, and new Claim 8 depends from Claim 4. Claims 6-8 are allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims.

This application is therefore in condition for allowance, and an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-9971) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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